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A Study On The Information Collecting Mode Of Secondary School Students In A Digital Setting

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Abstract

The widespread use of the Internet has opened up a significant amount of knowledge and is available immediately upon any search at anytime and anywhere. The Internet is tremendously useful for educational purposes by teachers as well as students and educational administrators and it has superseded libraries as a source for information gathering and research. In the present scenario the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have brought tremendous changes in gathering information among the primary and secondary students. The information-gathering of the students moved from print to online. The main focus of the study was to know the various information needs, the different techniques used to gather the information, perception and the various problems faced by the secondary students in collecting the information. 420 secondary students (plus 1 and 2) were taken from the aided and unaided schools of Trivandrum district and considered as the sample for the study. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the data. The results of the study showed that the majority of the students preferred to collect information from the internet than libraries. They faced various problems while accessing the information from the libraries as well as online, they preferred to use print and online information. They also satisfied with the information available from their respective libraries. The majority of them are aware of the current information regarding their particular subject areas. They preferred relevant information in their academic activities. Based on the outcome of research the researcher put forward a few suggestions.

Keywords: Reading habits, collecting information, digital devices, secondary school students, libraries, search engines, media, internet.

INTRODUCTION

Information is the processed data and it is essential in every area of academic exercises. Information is recognized as an influential weapon that acts as a fundamental position in the progress of the academicians. Chen and Hernon (1982) have defined that "Information is all knowledge, ideas, fact, data and imaginative works of mind which are communicated formally and informally in any format". It is the basic resource and it is needed by all. The information is presented in different patterns and kinds. As the requirements arise the needy individuals seek the information. There is constant change in information need, the way the individual access and use the needed information. The individual use the

information for different purposes such as preparing the exam, assignments, articles, for seminars and workshops, for innovation and research, all these activities lead the individual to seek, locate, find and gather the information from different sources.

Every student requires information to fulfill his or her academic activities, years back they only depend on the libraries and information centers to get the information but in the present scenario, they can access the information from different sources. The changing technologies have transformed the libraries a lot. Large numbers of libraries have made the online services and provide the information at users' point. But still today the libraries are the main point to access the academic information.

Globally the internet has become the most significant medium for communication and information. Through the World Wide Web (WWW) the students can get the needed materials for their curricular and co-curricular activities. The present generation access different form of resources using various databases, sites, social networking tools, and social media. They also familiar with varieties of search engines to search the resources. Much research showed that the students prefer to use the internet to collect the information rather than going to the library to access the information and the studies also revealed that the internet has become very successful in providing a hub of resources and services to the users.

In this modern world, Secondary students prefer to use the internet to gather information. Through the internet, they can access the E-resources according to one's convenience and the resources are available in WWW. The students must be made aware of the available resources, help them to locate, find and gather their figure tips. The students should be taught to increase their digital skills to use digital gadgets. Thus the current study has been conducted to know the information collecting mode of Secondary school students in digital settings.

OBJECTIVES

Following are the objectives of the study

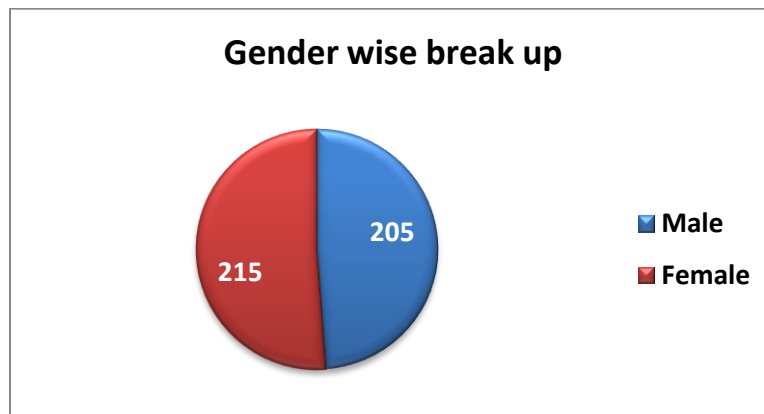
1. To determine the information needs of the Secondary School students in a digital setting
2. To know how the students accumulate and use the information
3. To discover students perception and use of library services
4. To study the different techniques and devices used to search for online information
5. To examine the various problems faced by the students while gathering information from the library and the Internet.

METHODOLOGY

The questionnaire method was used to gather primary data from secondary students. The data was collected from twenty aided and unaided schools of Trivandrum district. 510 questionnaires were distributed to the students out of 451 questionnaires were return, only 420 were filled and they were considered as the samples for the study. Out of 420 students there were 215 girls and 205 boys.

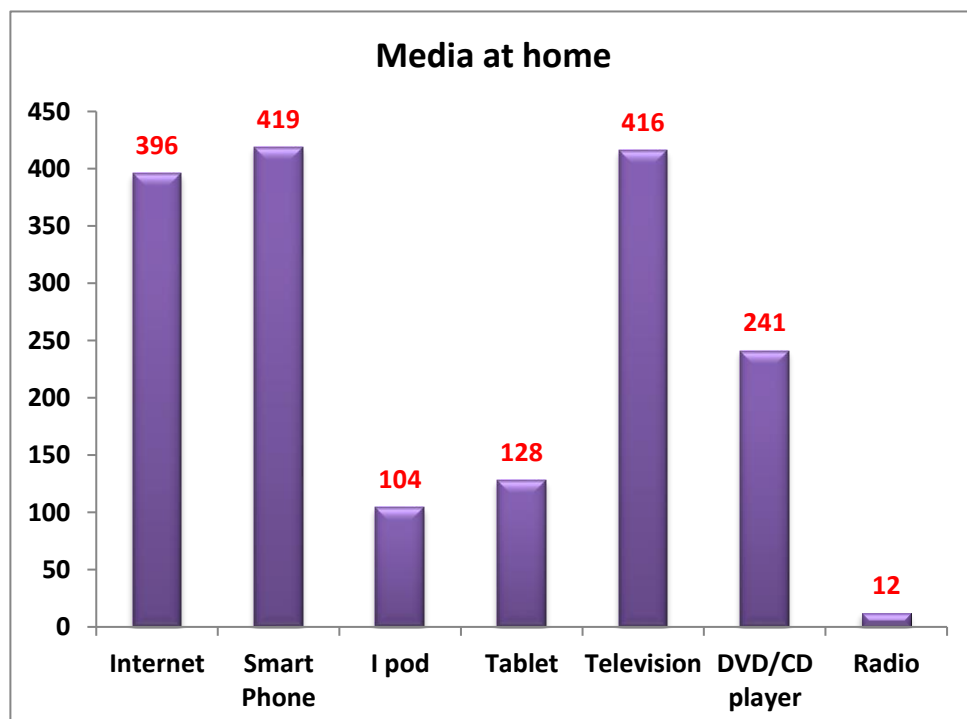
DATA ANALYSIS

Gender wise break up



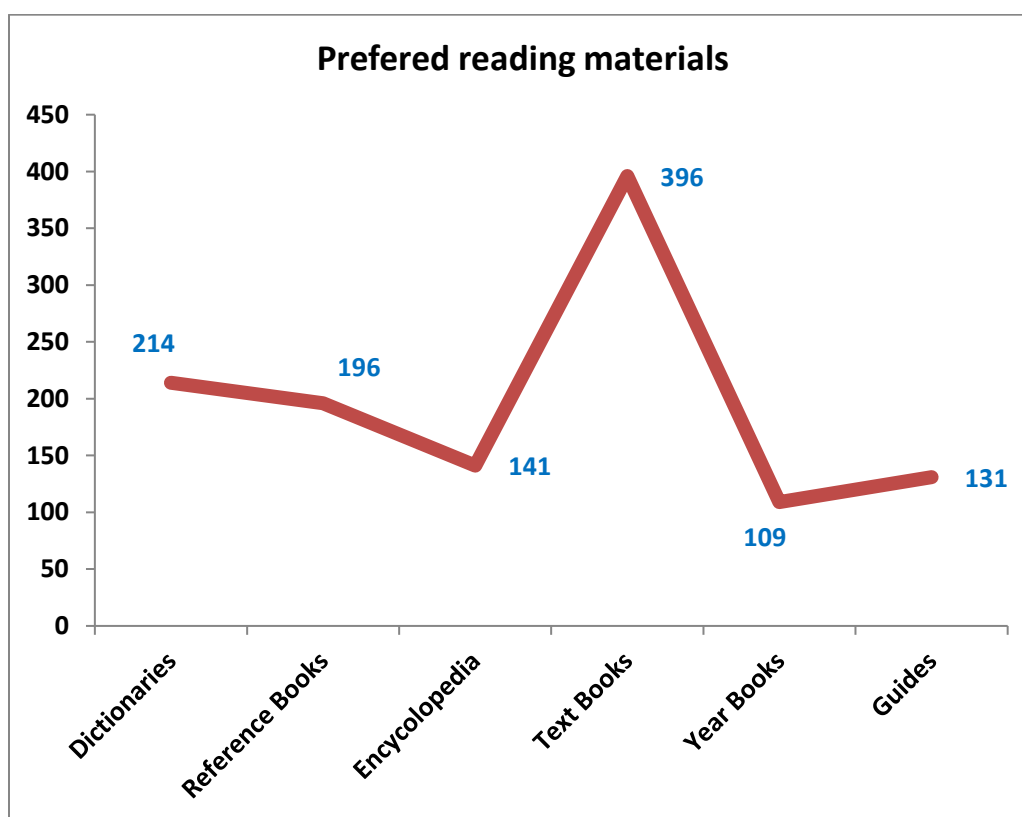
The samples of the study were 420 students, out of 215(51.19%) were female and 205(48.89%) were male.

Different media available at home



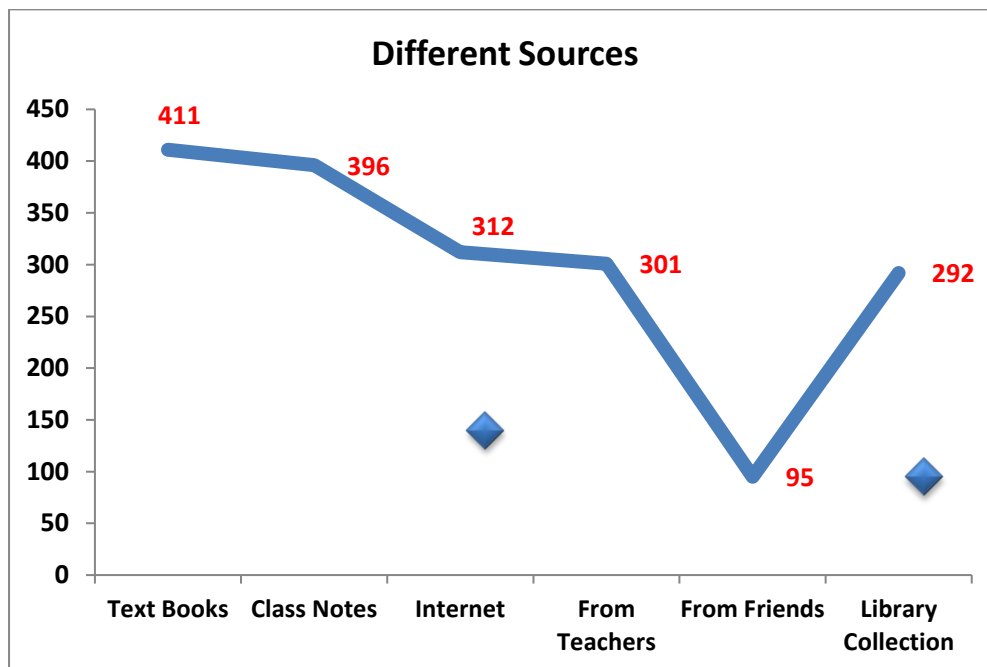
The above graph indicates the different availabilities of various media at home. Out of 420 students, 396(94.29%) agreed that they have an internet connection at home, followed by 419(99.77%) smartphone 104(24.77%) I pod, 128(30.48%) tablet, 416 (99.04%) television, 241(57.39%) DVD/CD player and 12(2.85%) radio.

The most preferred reading materials used to gather the needed information



The students were asked to point out their most suitable reading materials to collect their essential information for their academic purposes. There were different types of materials used by the students to get curricular and co-curricular activities. The above line chart demonstrates the list of the preferred materials. Out of 420 students 214(50.95%) of them preferred dictionaries, followed by 196(46.67%) reference books, 141(33.58%) encyclopedia, 396(94.29%) textbooks, 109(25.95%) yearbooks at last 131(31.19%) guides.

Different sources used to get the needed information



The students were asked to demonstrate the different sources from where they access the information. The study shows that they use various sources to get the information. Out of 411 (97.85%) they used textbooks, 396 (94.29%) class notes, 312 (74.29%) internets, 301(71.67%) from teachers, 95 (22.61%) from friends, ad at last 292 (69.52 %)from library collections.

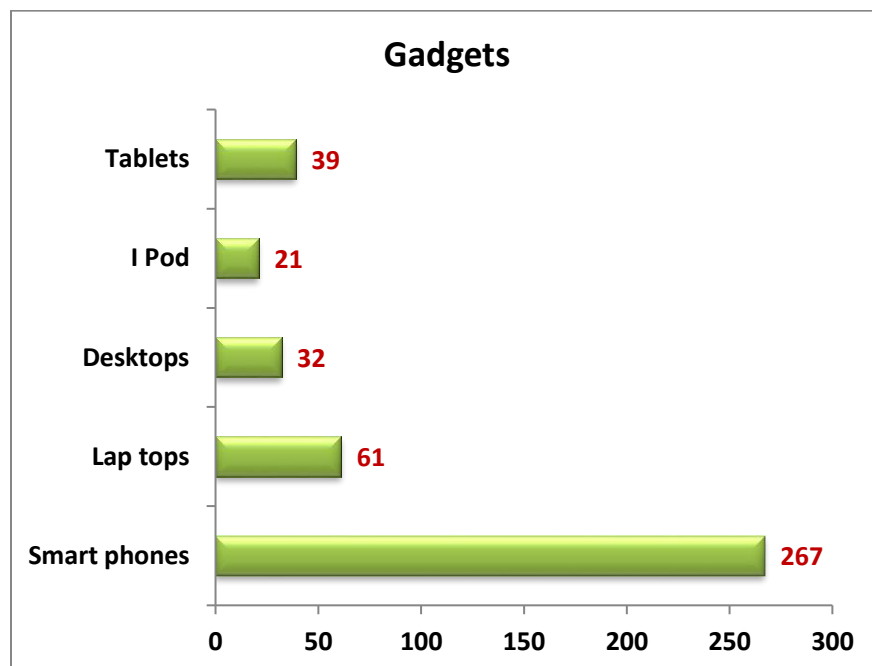
The topic of gathering the information

Topic	Response	%
Subjects related information	420	100
Novels	126	30
Sports and games	198	47.14
Dramas	52	12.39
Stories	184	43.89

Cartoons	21	5
Civil	6	1.42
Poetry	29	6.9
Entertainment	296	70.47
Transport	25	5.96
Current affairs	157	37.39
Any other	109	25.95

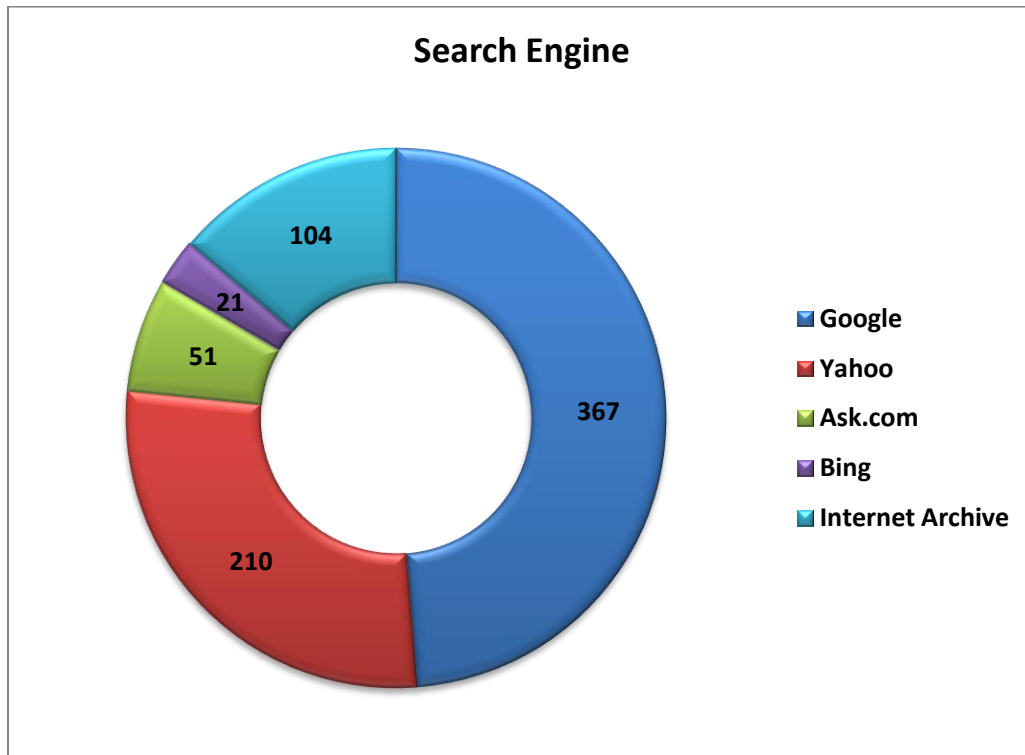
The students were requested to indicate the different topics in which they gather the information. From the study, it was clear that they collected the information in sports, subject related topics, current affairs, poetry. All the students gathered the information for their subject-related activities and most of them collected information for their entertainment that is 296(70.47%), followed by 25(5.96%) transport, 109(25.95%) collected information based on other topics.

Devices used by the students to gather the information



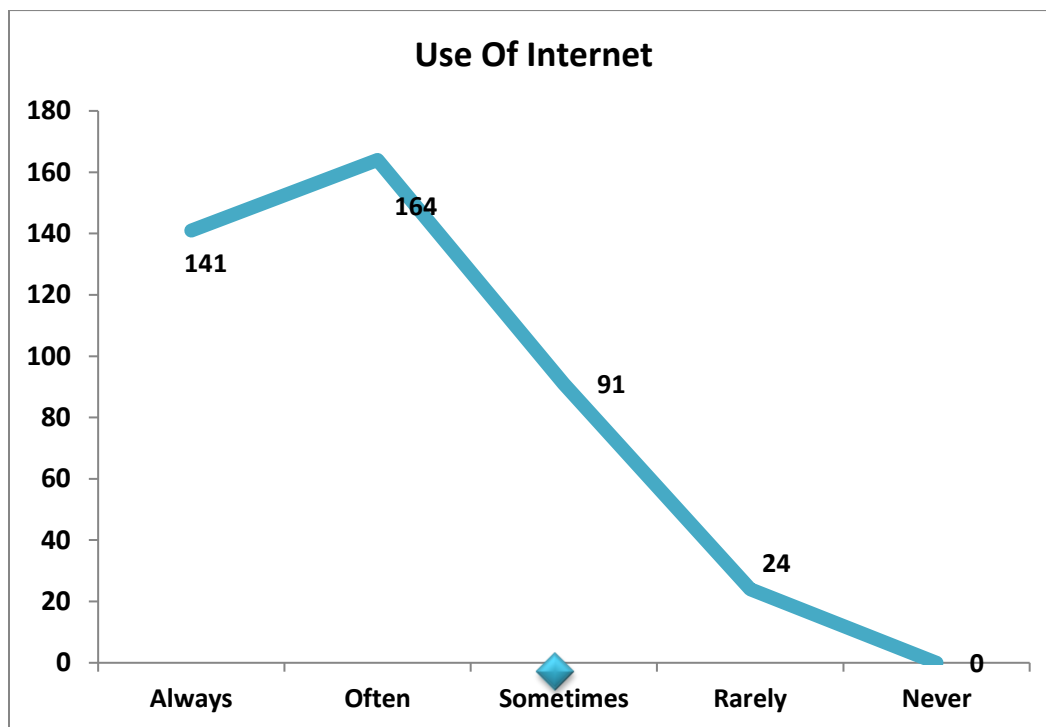
The bar graph displays the different gadgets used by the students to access the resources. Out of 420 students, 267(70.71%) used smartphones, followed by 61(14.52%) laptops, 32(7.61%) desktops 21(5%), 39(9.29%) of them used tablets.

Search engines used to search the information



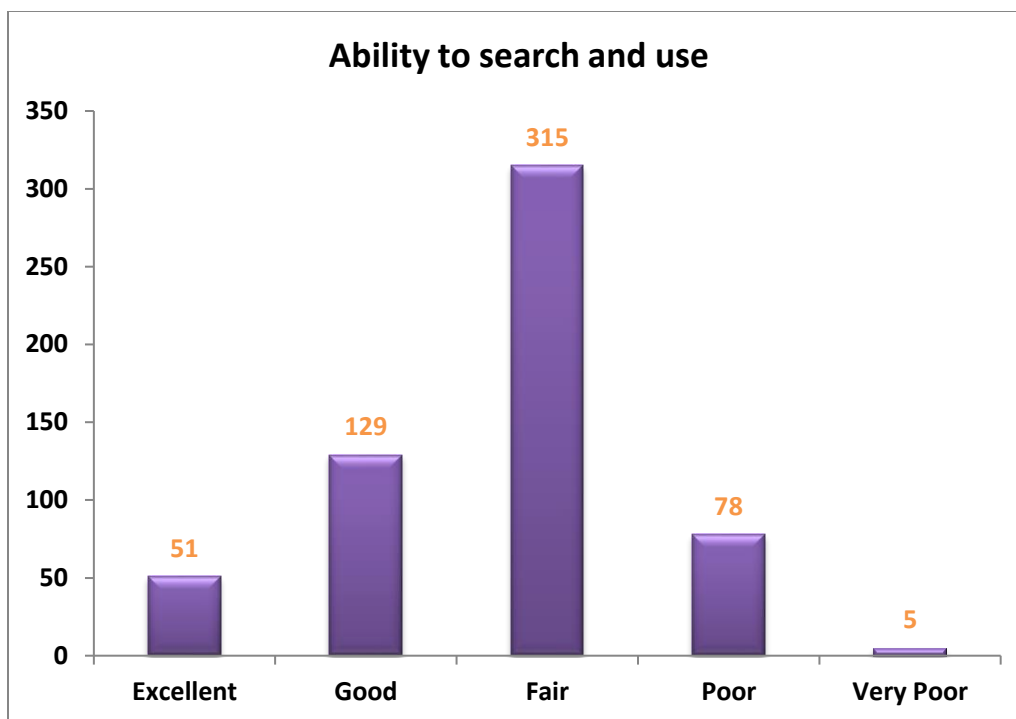
The students are requested to list out the search engines they used to locate and the various types of information. The majority of the students used Google as their most favored search engine, followed by 210 (50%) Yahoo, 51 (12.14%) Ask.com, 21(5%) Bing and 104(24.77%) Internet Archive.

Frequency of using Internet for gathering information



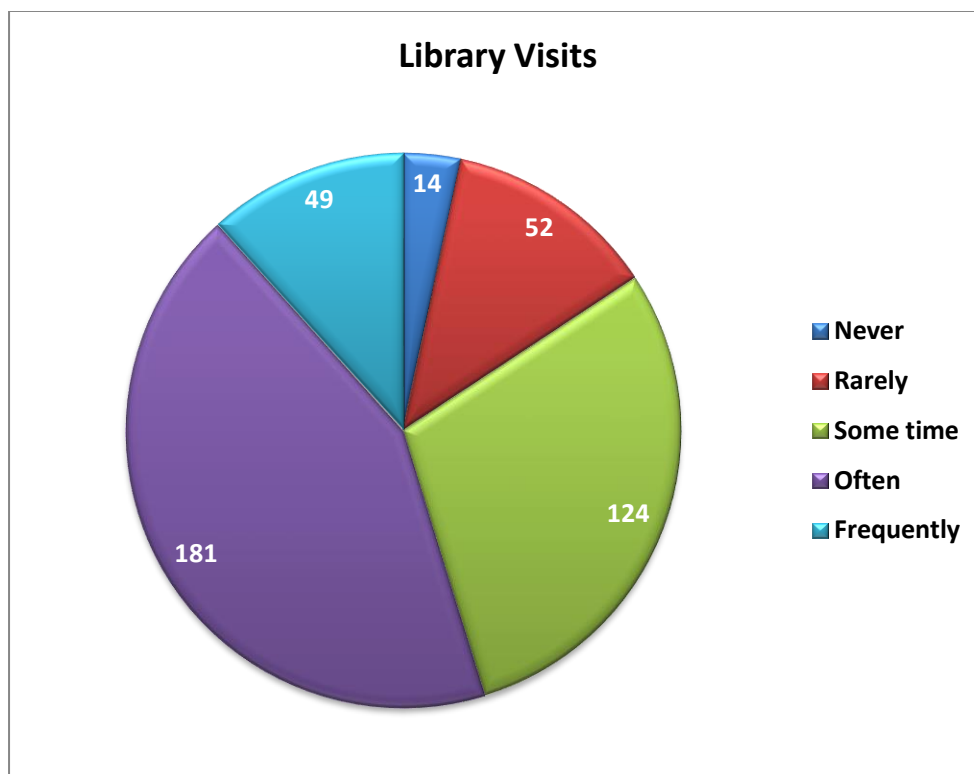
The above table shows the frequency of use of the internet. Out of 420 students 141(33.58%) of them always used the internet, followed by 164 (39.04%) often, 91(21.67%) sometimes, 24(5.71%) rarely.

Ability to search and use the E- Resources



The above graph indicates the abilities of the students in searching and using the information. Out of 420 students 51(12.14%) agreed that they are excellent in searching and using, followed by 129(30.71%) good, 315 (75%) fair, 78(18.57%) poor and 5(1.19%) very poor

Frequency of library visits



The students were asked to report their frequency of library visits. Out of 420 students 49(11.67%) of them visited frequently, followed by 181 (43.09%) often, 124 (29.52%) sometimes, 52 (12.39%) rarely and 14 (3.33%) never visited the library.

Different ways used to search the information

Searching the information from the lib	Response	%
Catalogue	128	30.48
Directly searching from the shelf	145	34.52
Approaching the staff for assistance	106	25.23
With the help of friends	41	9.77
Total	420	100

The table demonstrates the students used various ways to get the information from the library. Out of 420 used catalogue, followed by 145(34.52%) directly searching from the shelf, 106(25.23%) of them approached the library staff to assistance, 41 (9.77%) took assistance from their friends.

Purpose of visiting the library

Purpose of visiting the library	Response	%
To issue and return books	241	57.39
To read periodicals	124	29.52
For Internet facilities	169	40.23
Reprography	91	21.67
To consult library staff	68	16.19
To spent the leisure time	102	24.29
To study	197	46.9
Reference	154	36.67
To access the online information	218	51.9

The students were asked to designate the various purpose of visiting the library, out of 420 students 241 (57.39%) of them used to issue and return the books, 102 (24.29%) spent the free time in the library, 197(46.9%) used libraries for the study purposes and 218 (51.9%) of them used for to access the online information.

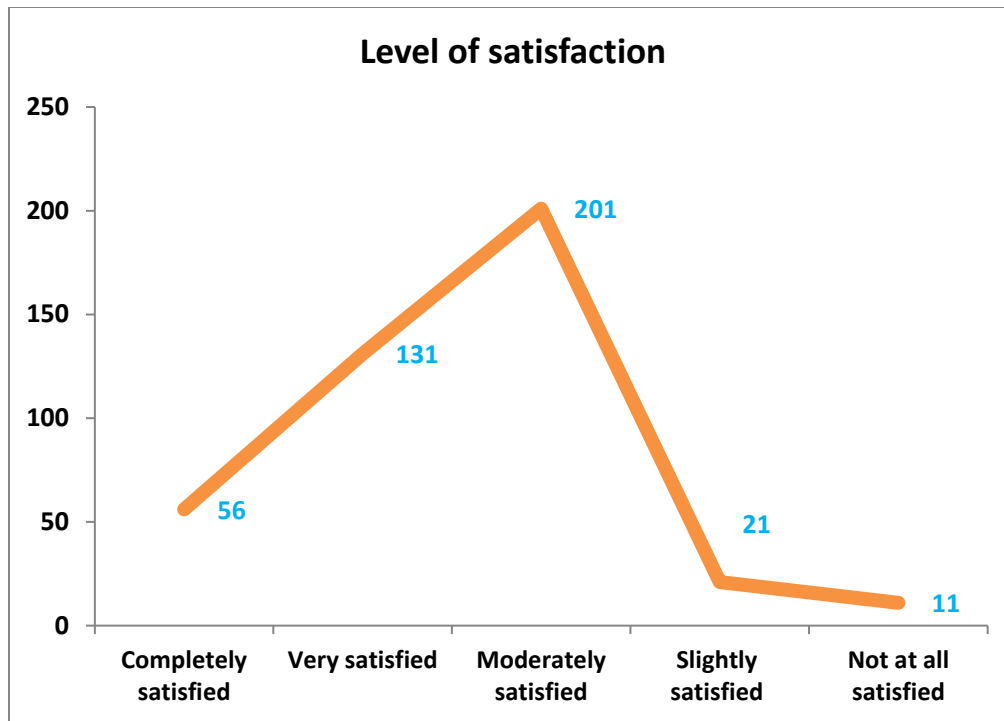
Variety of Problems faced by the students while gathering the information from the internet and library

Problems	Response	%
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Information Exploration	212	50.48
Selection of information	316	75.23
Lack of time	56	13.33
Librarian & staff are not friendly	32	7.61
Lack of information from the library	41	9.77
Difficulty in finding the information from the library	178	42.39
Lack of knowledge & skill in IT	107	25.48
Lack of awareness in E- resources	194	46.19
Lack of devices in the library to access the resources	132	31.42
Power failure	81	19.29
Slow net connection	22	5.23
Time spent in downloading	16	3.8
Difficulty in finding current information	218	51.94

The students faced different problems while getting information from libraries and online resources. Out of 420 students 16 (3.8%) of them opined that they spent a lot of time in downloading the files, followed by 218(51.94%) difficulties in finding the current information, 22(5.23%) slow internet connection, 32(7.61%) library staff are not friendly.

Satisfaction of library resources



The students were asked to express their level of satisfaction in using the library resources. 56(13.33 %) of the students said they are completely satisfied, followed by 131(31.19%) very satisfied, 201(47.85%) moderately satisfied, 21(5%) slightly satisfied and 11 (2.61%) of them not at all satisfied.

Findings

Following are the important findings of the study

1. Secondary students have different media at home and the majority of them have internet connections in their home.
2. Out of 420 students, 419 have smartphones and the only one did not have the smartphone
3. Only 12 (2.85%) of them have a radio at home. It shows that the radios are getting outdated.
4. Majority of secondary students that is 396 (94.29%) selected textbooks as their most suitable material for their study purposes.
5. The students used a variety of sources to get the information most of them used textbooks, class notes, and the internet.
6. 100% of the students gathered the information for their study-related activities
7. Different devices were used to collect the information from the Internet

8. The outcomes of the study present that as the innovation of disruptive technology most of the students are aware of the changing technology and using for their study purposes.
9. Majority of them used smartphones to access the information than desktops.
10. Nowadays the desktops are out of the market and outdated.
11. Out of 420 students, 367 accessed information by using Google
12. Only very few students used Bing
13. All the students have access to the internet and used the internet to gather the information.
14. Internet is one of the main sources to collect the information
15. Only 5(1.19%) students said that they are very poor in locating, searching and using the E-Resources.
16. There are 14 (3.33%) students never visited the library
17. Only 128 (30.48%) of them used the catalog to search the document from the library.
18. Only 68 of them took assistance from the library staff in getting the documents from the libraries.
19. Out of 420 students, 107 said that they don't have sufficient knowledge and skill in searching, locating and finding the information
20. Some of them agreed that they are not aware of the E-Resources
21. Majority of them have a problem in the selection of the accurate information
22. Few libraries are not up to date
23. The students also found difficulty in finding the documents from the libraries.
24. The majority of the respondents agreed that they are satisfied with the library collections and services.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following recommendations

1. The school should take step in conducting digital awareness to the students
2. The teachers should up to date the students with the latest information
3. The teachers and the library staff need to assist the students with relevant information
4. Training and orientation must provide to improve their digital literacy
5. Web information-gathering workshop should be conducted
6. Teachers can play a key role in using social networking sites in providing E-Resources
7. Inculcate digital awareness in the curriculum

Conclusions

The paper has pinpointed the information collecting mode of secondary school students in digital settings. The school children not only collect information from the internet they also depended on their school libraries and considered different services as the sources of their information. They not only used collected information for the curricular activities and even for the extracurricular activities. Many of them were serious and interested to use different methods and technologies to access the needed resources. One of the interesting findings of the study was the students are aware of the latest technologies of getting information and wanted to develop their IT skills. They not only depend on the class notes and textbooks, they also preferred various other sources to gain the information. The school authorities have a significant role in lifting up the digital information literacy of each and every student in their school campus.

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